

Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 HEW-04 FBIE-00 INSE-00 AID-05
VO-05 CA-01 DEAE-00 ABF-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 IGA-02
/094 W

-----099314 311118Z /17

P R 311231Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9000
INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMCONSUL SONGKHLA
AMCONSUL UDORN

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EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: SREF
SUBJECT: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES: VISIT BY INTERNATIONAL RESCUE
COMMITTEE (IRC) COMMISSION

REF: A) BANGKOK 2313 (NOTAL) B) STATE 19446
C) STATE 22656

1. THE EMBASSY WELCOMES THE VISIT OF THE IRC COMMISSION TO
STUDY THE REFUGEE PROBLEM. WE ARE CONFIDENT THE RTG WILL
WELCOME THIS DEMONSTRATION OF HIGH-LEVEL BUT UNOFFICIAL
CONCERN AND INTEREST WHICH CAN ONLY BENEFIT THEIR EFFORTS
IN REFUGEE FIELD. THE EMBASSY WILL LEND EVERY ASSISTANCE TO
ENSURE THAT THE COMMISSION HAS A USEFUL VISIT.

2. IN VIEW OF IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMISSION AND THE
PROMINENCE OF ITS MEMBERS, WE BELIEVE IT ESSENTIAL THAT THE
GROUP CALL ON SENIOR RTG OFFICIALS ON THE FIRST WORKING DAY
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AFTER THEIR ARRIVAL. NOT TO DO SO WOULD BE AN AFFRONT TO
THAI, PARTICULARLY SINCE WE WILL BE SECURING RTG PERMISSION
FOR THE GROUP TO ENTER CAMPS. FURTHERMORE, EARLY MEETINGS
WITH SENIOR THAI OFFICIALS WOULD BE PARTICULARLY VALUABLE
FOR THE COMMISSION IN ITS STUDY OF THE SITUATION HERE AND
WOULD PROVIDE OCCASIONS FOR EXPRESSING CONTINUING US
INTEREST IN ASSISTING THAILAND IN COPING WITH ITS

REFUGEE PROBLEM.

3. FOR THIS REASON WE PROPOSE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES, WHICH WILL NEVERTHELESS ALLOW THE COMMISSION TO MAKE ALL THE REQUESTED STOPS.

A. IN ORDER NOT TO WASTE A DAY WE SUGGEST THAT THE ENTIRE CHERNE GROUP TRAVEL BY DAO AIRCRAFT TO SONGKHLA ON FEB 12, DEPARTING AT ABOUT 0800 AND RETURNING IN THE LATE AFTERNOON. FLIGHT TAKES TWO HOURS.

B. THEN ON MONDAY, FEB 13, THE GROUP WOULD MEET WITH THE AMBASSADOR, THE FOREIGN MINISTER, PERHAPS THE PRIME MINISTER, UNHCR REPS AND VISIT THE DIN DAENG TRANSIT CENTER. IN THE EVENING THE AMBASSADOR WILL HOST A DINNER IN THE COMMISSION'S HONOR, TO WHICH OFFICIALS AND OTHERS INTERESTED IN THE REFUGEE FIELD WILL BE INVITED.

C. ON FEB 14, WE PROPOSE THE COMMISSION DIVIDES, WITH ONE GROUP GOING TO ARANYAPRATHET, STAYING OVERNIGHT IN CHANTHABURI, VISITING KAMPUT AND LAEM SING ON FEBRUARY 15, RETURNING TO CHANTHABURI FOR THE NIGHT OF FEB 15 AND RETURNING TO BANGKOK ON FEB 16. THE OTHER GROUP WE PROPOSE VISIT NONG KHAI, LOEI AND UDORN DURING FEB 14-15, AND SIMILARLY RETURN TO BANGKOK ON FEB 16. THIS TRAVEL WILL BE BY CAR AND/OR COMMERCIAL AIR. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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4. THESE CHANGES WILL NOT ONLY PERMIT THE GROUP TO SEE AS MUCH AS ORIGINALLY PLANNED, BUT IT WILL ALSO ENSURE THAT CLOSER ATTENTION IS GIVEN TO INLAND CAMPS WHERE MOST OF REFUGEES ARE.

5. THE EMBASSY REQUESTS THAT THE DEPT DISCUSS THESE CHANGES WITH THE COMMISSION AND REPLY SOONEST TO ENABLE US TO MAKE THE DETAILED ARRANGEMENTS WITH RTG. WE FORESEE NO PROBLEM WITH MAKING THE SONGKHLA VISIT BEFORE MEETING WITH RTG OFFICIALS, BUT AN EXTENDED TOUR BEFORE TOUCHING BASE WITH THAI OFFICIALDOM WOULD, IT SEEMS TO US, BE ILL ADVISED. WE TRUST THE FOREGOING WILL MEET WITH THE COMMISSION'S APPROVAL. WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEES, VISITS, COMMITTEES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BANGKO03079
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780045-1099
Format: TEL
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978016/aaaaaebr.tel
Line Count: 109
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 079063e3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION HA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: 78 BANGKOK 2313, 78 STATE 19446
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3768752
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES: VISIT BY INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE (IRC) COMMISSION
TAGS: SREF, TH, IRC, INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/079063e3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014